DECEMBER 21, 2009
VOL. 82, NO. 4234

Linn's Stamp NEWS

World's Largest Weekly Stamp News and Marketplace

Postal Service saves Operation Santa

The popular USPS Santa letters program and a North Pole postmarking effort will continue in 2009.

Page 10

Is this the first Christmas stamp?

The "Xmas 1898" inscription on this Canadian stamp gives it an undeniable holiday connection.

Page 36

Vote for your favorite U.S. stamp of 2009

Individuals and stamp club members are invited to participate in the 2009 *Linn's* U.S. Stamp Popularity Poll.

Page 62

Gross sale nets $3.28 million for museum; auction record set for single Canadian stamp

By Matthew Healey

A cover with the world's only mirror-image stamp and a record-setting Canadian 12-penny stamp were the highlights of a Nov. 19 double auction that raised $3.28 million to benefit the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum.

These were among 220 other items belonging to billionaire bond manager William H. Gross, who by now is as famous in stamp collecting circles as he is on Wall Street.

His collections of Confederate stamps, including many rare postmasters' provisionals, and British North America stamps were offered in back-to-back sales by Spink Shreves Galleries in New York. Gross and his wife, Sue, immediately donated the entire proceeds to the museum.

The donation is part of a total gift of $8 million that the Grosses have pledged toward the building of a new visitor center to allow the public better access to the national stamp collection and to learn about philately.

This Canadian 12-penny Queen Victoria stamp (Scott 3) from the William H. Gross collection was sold by Spink Shreves Galleries for $299,000 on Nov. 19.

In recent years, Gross has sold other parts of his worldwide collection and donated the proceeds to charities such as Doctors without Borders.

Including the latest sales, Gross has now realized nearly $15.5 million from selling his stamps, making his the most valuable stamp collection ever sold, according to Charles F. Shreve, president of Spink Shreves Galleries.

Gross, whose firm, Pimco, has earned billions trading bonds, decided to collect stamps after his own analysis of the rare stamp market over the long term convinced him that top-quality stamps could rise in value at a rate comparable with other investments.

The sales of his stamp collections in recent years have generally proven him right, with some stamps

Please turn to page 40

U.S. 27¢ Kiwi color-omitted error stamps found

By Jay Bigalke

Multiple examples of a recent U.S. coil stamp color-omitted error have been discovered and certified as genuine.

The 27¢ Kiwi coil stamp (Scott 4262), from the set of five 27¢ Tropical Fruit stamps issued in April 2008, has been found with one specific light green ink completely omitted. As a result, the 27¢ denomination, the fruit name and the year date are missing from the Kiwi stamp.

The stamps are from a coil of 100 printed by Avery Dennison.

The error stamps were certified as genuine by the American Philatelic Expertizing Service on Nov. 19.

The person who discovered the error stamps asked not to be named. Tom Fortunato of New York has assisted the person who made the discovery, and spoke with *Linn's* about the errors.

According to Fortunato, two rolls of the Tropical Fruit stamps were purchased by a local business.

"The stamps were used over an eight- or nine-month period when a co-worker noticed that one of the stamps looked funny," said Fortunato.

The co-worker noticed the denomination was missing from the Kiwi stamps, and removed several of the Kiwi error stamps from

Please turn to page 12

Part of a coil strip of United States 27¢ Tropical Fruit stamps, digitally cropped. The single light green "1" from the plate number is missing from the Pomegranate stamp. The missing light green ink eliminates all the inscriptions on the Kiwi stamp.

www.linns.com

READY TO EXPIRE?
MAILED DECEMBER 7 $2.50

IF THE DATE ON YOUR LABEL IS JANUARY 18, 2010 (011810), IT'S TIME TO RENEW.

POSTCARD & COVER AUCTION

JAN 16 & 17

Regency-Superior
St. Louis, Missouri

SPACE-RELATED COVERS • ROCKET MAIL • BOX LOTS
MCINTYRE COVERS • FDC • STAMPLESS COVERS
AIRMAIL COVERS • THOUSANDS OF POSTCARDS

Complimentary color catalog available for active bidders:

800.782.0066
www.RegencySuperior.com

STAMPS • COINS • SPACE • SPORTS • HOLLYWOOD

REGENCY SUPERIOR

Saint Louis, Missouri
229 N. Euclid Avenue
Saint Louis, MO 63108

Beverly Hills, California
9478 W. Olympic Blvd., Suite 200
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Tropical Fruit error stamps found

Continued from page 1

the coil and placed them on liner paper from the same coil strip.

Fortunato said nine single color-omitted error Kiwi stamps were handled in this manner.

The original finder discovered a mint strip of 54 stamps from the beginning of one of the coil rolls. This mint strip was sent to the American Philatelic Expertizing Service and received a certificate identifying the Kiwi stamps as errors.

Pictured on page 1 is the only plate number single from the 54-stamp strip (the Pomegranate stamp), a normal Star Fruit stamp, and a Kiwi error stamp.

The Kiwi stamps are missing the inscription "27 USA" from the upper left corner, the word "Kiwi" from the lower left corner, and the 2008 year date from the lower right corner.

The plate number is on every 40th stamp in the Tropical Fruit coil. The mint strip of 54 stamps contains only one plate number stamp.

The plate number for this coil consists of one letter and seven digits made up of different colors: V1111111. The light green digit (Pantone Matching System 390) is normally located at the end of the plate number sequence.

On the plate number single there is a large gap between the last two digits, because the teal ink is shifted on the Pomegranate stamp. Note that the teal text for this stamp touches the fruit design at left.

Scott catalog editors were unavailable for comment as this issue of *Linn's* was going to press.

It is likely that the 27c Kiwi color-omitted error stamp will be listed as a major error in Vol. 1 of the 2011 Scott *Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, scheduled for publication in April. ■

VFW post seeks donations

The Capt. Vincent F. Atene Post No. 3230 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is requesting donations of stamps and supplies for use in its program for hospitalized veterans.

Donations may be sent to Joseph J. Ruggiero PPC, 1403 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11228-3905. ■

HUNGARY YEAR SETS
Complete with all Stamps & Souvenir Sheets

Year	Mint NH	Year	Mint NH	Year	Mint NH	Year	Mint NH
1956	$ 41.25	1968	$ 31.50	1980	$ 33.75	1992	$ 67.50
1957	$ 50.00	1969	$ 32.50	1981	$ 32.50	1993	$ 77.50
1958	$ 237.75	1970	$ 31.50	1982	$ 35.25	1994	$ 55.00
1959	$ 91.50	1971	$ 33.75	1983	$ 36.25	1995	$ 43.75
1960	$ 102.75	1972	$ 40.25	1984	$ 27.50	1996	$ 122.50
1961	$ 76.50	1973	$ 37.75	1985	$ 36.25	1997	$ 81.25
1962	$ 55.00	1974	$ 42.75	1986	$ 32.50	1998	$ 81.25
1963	$ 40.25	1975	$ 37.75	1987	$ 38.75	1999	$ 144.00
1964	$ 43.75	1976	$ 37.75	1988	$ 33.75	2000	$ 141.50
1965	$ 37.75	1977	$ 42.75	1989	$ 42.75	2001	$ 120.00
1966	$ 36.25	1978	$ 37.75	1990	$ 63.75	2002	$ 130.25
1967	$ 37.75	1979	$ 36.25	1991	$ 78.75	Other Years Available	

COMPLETE YEAR SETS
with all Postage Stamps & Souvenir Sheets

AUSTRIA			W. GERMANY			LIECHTENSTEIN		
Years	Mint NH	Used	Years	Mint NH	Used	Years	Mint NH	Used
1960-69	$ 85.	$ 75.	1960-69	$ 95.	$ 85.	1960-69	$ 215.	$ 155.
1970-79	$ 125.	$ 100.	1970-79	$ 280.	$ 140.	1970-79	$ 140.	$ 100.
1980-89	$ 210.	$ 170.	1980-89	$ 390.	$ 160.	1980-89	$ 150.	$ 120.
1990-99	$ 300.	$ 285.	1990-99	$ 650.	$ 420.	1990-99	– o –	$ 220.

• Money - Back Guarantee • All sales subject to stock • VISA/MC/Check • Add $3 postage for USA & Canada

PO Box 1732
Port Angeles, WA
98362-0089

Don S. Cal
www.DonSCal.com

Tel: 1 (250) 383-6211
Fax: 1 (250) 383-6288
Dealer member APS since 1985

Linn's Stamp NEWS
World's Largest Weekly Stamp News and Marketplace
DECEMBER 21, 2009
VOL. 82, NO. 4214

U.S. 27¢ Kiwi color-omitted error stamps found

By Jay Bigalke

Multiple examples of a recent U.S. coil stamp color-omitted error have been discovered and certified as genuine.

The 27¢ Kiwi coil stamp (Scott 4262), from the set of five 27¢ Tropical Fruit stamps issued in April 2008, has been found with one specific light green ink completely omitted. As a result, the 27¢ denomination, the fruit name and the year date are missing from the Kiwi stamp.

The stamps are from a coil of 100 printed by Avery Dennison.

The error stamps were certified as genuine by the American Philatelic Expertizing Service on Nov. 19.

Part of a coil strip of United States 27¢ Tropical Fruit stamps, digitally cropped. The single light green "1" from the plate number is missing from the Pomegranate stamp. The missing light green ink eliminates all the inscriptions on the Kiwi stamp.

The person who discovered the error stamps asked not to be named. Tom Fortunato of New York has assisted the person who made the discovery, and spoke with *Linn's* about the errors.

According to Fortunato, two rolls of the Tropical Fruit stamps were purchased by a local business.

"The stamps were used over an eight- or nine-month period when a co-worker noticed that one of the stamps looked funny," said Fortunato.

The co-worker noticed the denomination was missing from the Kiwi stamps, and removed several of the Kiwi error stamps from

Please turn to page 12

RENEW.

Tropical Fruit error stamps found

Continued from page 1

the coil and placed them on liner paper from the same coil strip.

Fortunato said nine single color-omitted error Kiwi stamps were handled in this manner.

The original finder discovered a mint strip of 54 stamps from the beginning of one of the coil rolls. This mint strip was sent to the American Philatelic Expertizing Service and received a certificate identifying the Kiwi stamps as errors.

Pictured on page 1 is the only plate number single from the 54-stamp strip (the Pomegranate stamp), a normal Star Fruit stamp, and a Kiwi error stamp.

The Kiwi stamps are missing the inscription "27 USA" from the upper left corner, the word "Kiwi" from the lower left corner, and the 2008 year date from the lower right corner.

The plate number is on every 40th stamp in the Tropical Fruit coil. The mint strip of 54 stamps contains only one plate number stamp.

The plate number for this coil consists of one letter and seven digits made up of different colors: V1111111. The light green digit (Pantone Matching System 390) is normally located at the end of the plate number sequence.

On the plate number single there is a large gap between the last two digits, because the teal ink is shifted on the Pomegranate stamp. Note that the teal text for this stamp touches the fruit design at left.

Scott catalog editors were unavailable for comment as this issue of *Linn's* was going to press.

It is likely that the 27¢ Kiwi color-omitted error stamp will be listed as a major error in Vol. 1 of the 2011 Scott *Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, scheduled for publication in April. ■

VFW post seeks donations

The Capt. Vincent F. Atene Post No. 3230 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is requesting donations of stamps and supplies for use in its program for hospitalized veterans.

Donations may be sent to Joseph J. Ruggiero PPC, 1403 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11228-3905. ■